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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [IN](#) [KCRM](#)

SUBJECT: MUMBAI TERROR ATTACKS: MUKHERJEE-ZARDARI CALL DID NOT TAKE PLACE

REF: A. NEW DELHI 3037
[B](#). NEW DELHI 3024

Classified By: Ambassador David Mulford for Reasons 1.4 (B and D)

[1](#)1. (C) Post now believes that Indian External Affairs Minister Pranab Mukherjee did not in fact phone Pakistan President Asif Ali Zardari November 28 despite conflicting reports from the Indian Government. Ministry of External Affairs Joint Secretary (Americas) Gaitri Kumar had originally told PolCouns December 1 that the call did take place. However, National Security Advisor Narayanan told the Ambassador later on December 1 that no such call took place, and that he would have known if it had (ref A).

[1](#)2. (C) To clear up the confusion, J/S Kumar shared with PolCouns December 3 a version of events that Post assesses to be factually correct and consistent with what Narayanan told Ambassador Mulford, a November 28 MEA press release, and Mukherjee's own account to Secretary Rice in their meeting December 3 (septel). Kumar shared that Mukherjee had last spoken directly with Zardari in an informal setting during his May visit to Islamabad, before Zardari was elected President, adding that he had "'never'" spoken with Zardari by phone. Since then, Mukherjee had only spoken to his counterpart, Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi. Qureshi was in India when the Mumbai attacks began, but departed early without completing his program. Mukherjee then spoke to Qureshi -- not Zardari -- by phone the evening of November [1](#)28. According to Kumar, Mukherjee did not convey any threats, but rather read the talking points shared with the Ambassador by Foreign Secretary Shivshankar Menon on November 29 (ref B). When asked by media about the conversation, Qureshi reportedly confirmed that no threats were issued. Kumar gave no explanation for the discrepancy between this report and her report on December 1. (Note: Post suspects she incorrectly inferred that a Mukherjee-Zardari call took place from the fact that Mukherjee's office had, as a precaution, prepared points for him to use if Zardari were to phone Prime Minister Singh when he was unavailable, leaving Mukherjee to receive the call. End Note.)

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